

MENT

R A. TRASK

Mrs. Trull broke the sugar bowl, and knocked the spoon off'n the teapot. And there was Mis' Holbrook's fore room things—but there, you never know how a man will act when he's love cracked."

The night after the auction, Robert sat in his bare and dismantled house. He was alone, save for the cat, which jumped purring to his knee. He stroked her glossy back, and she relaxed into that confiding half-somber which the feline race seems able to enjoy under all circumstances.

To-morrow, she was to go to live with Mrs. Lane, and her master was to go forth into another life.

Mrs. Trull had departed, with many tears, and the people who had got bargains at the auction had taken most of the household belongings away.

Robert's little hand strayed to the yellowed keys of May Lou's instrument, and fell upon the familiar notes of Green-ville.

The door of the front room opened softly—softly that he did not hear the creaking of the hinges, and a tall young woman stole into the apartment. She stepped noiselessly up behind the absent-minded player. A light hand fell on the man's shoulder.

"Robert," said a voice which sent every drop of blood in the man's body leaping madly through his veins, "I have come back."

He sprang to his feet and faced her. "Louise!" he cried, "you have come back—for what?"

"For the love I once let go"—she said steadily, though her sensitive cheek crimsoned beneath her gaze. "I have met the world, and conquered it, but it has not made me happy. A woman needs more than fortune—more than fame—more than the applause of a fickle crowd. In the days which have passed since we met, I have longed to feel the pulses of a heart that I knew beat true. The longing has brought me back."

"But your voice, Louise—the voice that has charmed us thousands, the voice that is the gracious gift of heaven—what will you do with it?"

She leaned toward him—her pure soul shining through her eyes.

"I will keep it sweet and true singing lullabies to the babes which in God's mercy may call me mother."

Robert took her in his arms, and kissed her lips and brow, and the soft cheek which hid its blushes against his own.

By and by, when the shadows gathered, his hand strayed again over the keys of the instrument, and this time in accord with his laborious picking out of the notes of Greenville, rose the wondrous voice of the prima donna in such waves of melody as had never before stirred the staid and decorous silence of that old front room:

"Front the front of glory gleaming,
Light celestial charms our eyes,
Mercy from above proclaims
Peace and pardon, from the skies."

"It beats the Dutch!" Mis' Norris remarked to Mrs. Lane a few days after the return of May Lou, "how things do work round. May Lou got sick of playing, and come right back to Robert, and he ain't going to go to Klondykes, but he's jest going to build the old Holbrook house all over, and have it for a summer home. They'll go to the city in the winter. Money enough between 'em to do most anything. Strange though, that she should come back."

The fashionably audience looked wonderingly at the grave-faced man who sat so quiet through the three acts of the popular opera—who never took his sombre eyes from the stage—who never joined in the tumultuous applause, and who, at the close of the performance, took his hat and went away, with his eyes fixed straight before him, like one who is walking in his sleep.

That radiant vision of white and gold, of starry eyes—of crimson lips, from which floated forth a breath of song pure and clear, and spontaneous as the note of a bird—that was never May Lou—May Lou, whose white hands had held close in his—whose brow he had kissed—whose bonny golden head he had once hoped would nestle in his bosom until they both should grow old, and be permitted to go quietly forth into the life which takes hold on eternity.

Could it be that he had ever held in his horny hands those slim fingers which now blazed with diamonds? Could it be that he had touched his lips to that snowy forehead on which a crown would sit so regally? Could it be that he—plain, common sense Robert Holbrook—had ever been insane enough to think that this repellent queen of fashion and song, would be content to sit at his humble fireside—would cook his frugal dinners—iron his coarse flannel shirts—and sew patches on his blue jeans? What a fool he had been in those far away days, and what a besotted fool she must have thought him!

The dissolution of Russia. The overthrow of Turkey. The assassination of the Czar of Russia. The assassination of the Sultan of Turkey.

The prevention of three wars by President Roosevelt.

A protracted rate race war in the South. Destructive spring floods in the United States.

A destructive eruption of Mount Etna.

The activity of Mount Pelee and Poopetepelt.

Volcanic eruptions in all parts of the world.

The eruption of many volcanoes now proposed to be extinct.

Great loss of life at sea by storms.

Destruction of two Western cities by cyclones.

Earthquakes in all parts of the world.

Devastating earthquakes in California and the Philippines.

Rebellion in Spain.

Great disturbances all over Europe.

Spanzer says further that the summer of 1906 will be hot and sultry throughout the temperate zone, with a high death rate.

That Christ will make his Spirit felt among the people of the United States and England, in which countries there are to fervent religions, and potent political movements, which are to overcome in a great degree the present spirit of materialism.

That the United States will continue as a world power and the leader of other nations.

That Pennsylvania is to have an administration of the people and that discoveries of corruption will be made which will drive some of the guilty to suicide.

That God will seek terrible vengeance upon the Russians for the massacre of the Jews.

Robert Holbrook's got a streak of insanity in him," said Mrs. Norris, as she discussed the matter with Mrs. Lane after the auction, "the idea of losing that's peanly clean across to the Pacific ocean, and my niece, Sarah Jane Briggs, had set her heart on bidding it off! I should have thought he'd liked to keep his poor mother's best chinny set, though old.

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